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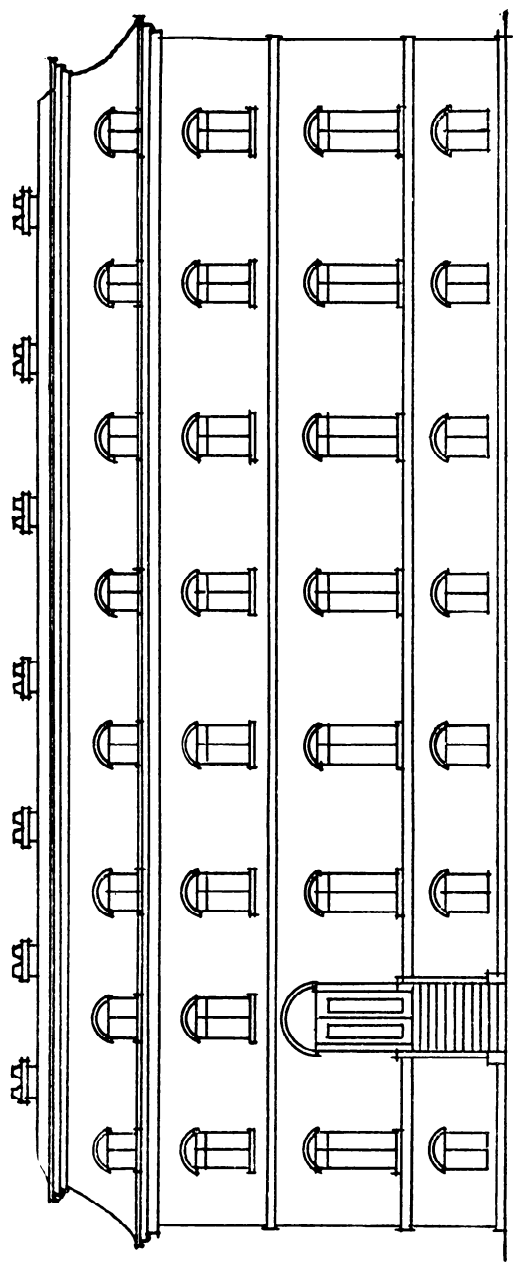
REMINISCENCES OF LAKE FOREST ACADEMY AND
ITS STUDENTS FROM THE OPENING OF THE
ACADEMY IN THE FALL OF 1859 TO THE
YEAR 1863, INCLUSIVE.

BY GEORGE MANIERRE.

In the early days of the Lake Forest Academy, Chicago boys went by Lake Street through Canal Street to reach the Northwestern Station. There were no sidewalks on Canal Street and it was usually filled with freight cars. The only other way of getting there was along Kinzie Street across a primitive bridge. The station itself was a one-story wooden building. A primeval forest, which stretched from Evanston to beyond Waukegan, supplied the wood that was used for all the engines. A rough wooden shed there was the only station, and the roads leading to the Academy were but partially opened, being turned up by the plow. A path, however, along the edge of the woods, was used by the boys to get to the Academy.

An infinite variety of wild song birds frequented these woods and prairies and also game of many sorts. Near the School were black and fox squirrels and partridge, while west of the track quail and prairie chickens were found in abundance. The flight of wild pigeons in the spring literally clouded the sky and the lake was covered with ducks, geese and swans. During one afternoon, John Patterson and Vilasco Chandler got 40 mallards in a little pond in the woods west of the track and these two with myself in a single day's hunt on the Des-Plaines River, shot about a hundred wild pigeons.

The forest trees were for the most part of the hard variety, Oak, Hickory and Elm, but along the edge of the ravines and towering above all other trees were majestic pines, which



ACADEMY BUILDING, LIND UNIVERSITY. LAKE FOREST, ILL.
(Drawn From Memory by George Manierre.)

always retained their green verdure in the winter. In Autumn the hardwood trees were ablaze with color—"beeches glowed, maples burned and oaks smouldered," while in Spring after a sudden snap of cold had frozen the soft snow upon the bare boughs, the glittering splendor of the woods was beyond description.

The ravines were very wild and beautiful and full of flowers of every sort, notably the Lady Slipper, which grew profusely there. In the spring when the water was high suckers used to run up the ravines and could be caught in great quantities, and in the spring overflow we once saw a large pickerel in the Skokie Marsh west of the depot.

About the Marsh could be heard the booming of the prairie chickens, the twittering of countless red-winged black birds and the beautiful notes of meadow larks and bobolinks. In the woods red-headed woodpeckers and blue jays made up for their harsh cries by the beauty of their plumage, and through the night the weird hooting of the owls echoed through the forest.

The word "Skokie" is of Indian origin. Its significance is uncertain but is thought to mean "open marshy land." These two marshes ran parallel for a long distance north and south and then united and extended to the North Branch of the Chicago River. My friend, Thomas Atteridge, Senior, an early settler of Lake Forest who built his log cabin in 1837 along side of the Green Bay Road west of the railroad depot, told me that within his knowledge the marginal lands of the Skokie marshes were not timbered, that the forest covered his land to the margin of the Eastern Marsh, and from these trees his log cabin was built.

Thomas Atteridge died in 1874. During the comparatively short period of 37 years, from the time that he literally hewed his farm out of the primeval forest, to the day of his death, he saw the grandeur of the wilderness give place, as if by magic, to the conventional beauty of Lake Forest, now one of America's most fashionable suburbs.

The Academy was a three story building with basement, the entrance facing toward the west. The school room was on the south part of the main floor and Professor Miller's parlor and bed rooms were right across the hall. So primitive were these days that once Professor Miller's baby crawled across the hall into the school room and payed an unofficial visit to the classes, to the pride of the father and the delight of the students.

In the school room we all had separate desks. Professor Miller sat on a platform. All classes were conducted here, except Latin and Greek, which were held in an adjoining room under Professor Dickinson. In those days there were no servants in the Academy and we had to clean our own rooms. As it was a long step to the well and outhouses, we simplified matters by throwing slops out of our windows.

At first we ate at a primitive hotel, which I chiefly remember owing to the fact that John Patterson consumed seventeen pancakes there at one sitting. Later Mrs. Kent gave us our meals in her house near and north of the Academy and we were always well fed. These were genial meetings. Fred Kent was the carver and when any particular friend of his asked for another *small* slice of meat, it was understood that a large one was wanted and he got it. Occasionally we varied our diet by cooking frogs legs and oysters in our own rooms, and these feasts were considered most delectable. In connection with this I cannot but mention Mr. and Mrs. Snodgrass, the caretakers of the school. They were the kindest of people, and seldom did a boy return of a Saturday night tired and hungry without finding something to eat kept hot for him in her kitchen by the motherly Mrs. Snodgrass.

At first we studied by candle light and afterwards by kerosene lamps. We had to make our own fires, bring our water from the well and cut our own wood, as no coal was used in those days at Lake Forest.

With only the water in our pitchers for bathing purposes in winter we took a low neck wash and in summer bathed in the lake.

Our room was decorated with spoils taken from the woods—skins of animals and birds hung on the walls and on the woodwork were pinned many specimens of butterflies and “bugs.” In a discarded glass honey box we kept two garter snakes. On the wall hung a canary cage and on the ledges of the window frames sat two beautiful flying squirrels, sleepy in the day time but lively at night.

The boys had complete control of the upper floors, for we had no supervision after school hours and maintained discipline ourselves. If anyone got obstreperous, however, he was soon made to find his place.

In the attic of the Academy building was a room half filled with a bed, mattress and other furniture and an old blackboard. I had been taking lessons on the flute and it was in this room in the early morning that I used to practice. But after a time the wailing notes of “Away with Melancholy” would reach the ears of some restless sleeper who declared that it made him tired—and so it was forcibly discontinued. I then took to the blackboard on which I would trace the figures of the geometry lesson for the day and after giving it sleepy attention, I too was made tired and finished my sleep on the uncovered mattress in the room. It is remarkable how long I kept this up, thinking I was working hard at my lessons—for I have always tried to be conscientious in my work.

Besides the regular routine, which consisted mainly of studying, the care of our rooms, and regular attendance at church and Sunday school, the boys had many and varied pleasures. Chief among these were trapping and hunting. We used a rifle in those days that weighed sixteen pounds and many is the mile that we have lugged it about after game or to some place where we might set up a target.

We would sometimes trap for rabbits and quail. The rabbits would often get away and occasionally skunks would take their place. One of these latter had its family on the banks of the ravine not very far from the Academy, but the boys never disturbed them.

In the winter time we skated on the ice in the ravines, on the Skokie Marsh or on the lake. This latter was dangerous, however, and I remember Dave Burr going through an air hole and only saving himself by having the presence of mind to throw out his arms to support him till we could pull him out.

Near Christmas and holidays, a number of the boys, with Ellery Miller for driver, would get an old horse and wagon and go out into the woods near Lake Bluff for pine trees and trailing vines to decorate the Academy. These were joyous times and the boys were always in high spirits. Toward the end of the winter, just before spring, we used to get maple sap from the trees. In summer the boys would camp out in the woods, satisfied with such food as roasted corn and a slice of bread. Once we attempted to camp out without food or tent, but this ended disastrously in our being driven away by a combined attack of hunger and mosquitoes and we had to grope our way back through the woods to the Academy after midnight. We had the same experience when camping on the DesPlaines River, but there in addition to the mosquitoes we were kept away by the bellowing of immense bull frogs that lived in the river in large numbers.

Highland Park at this time had no inhabitants east of the railroad track, and was covered by a primeval forest from the beach to the track, with the exception of one open field. The extreme loneliness of this region may be imagined from what once occurred on one of our walks along the beach. Our attention was attracted to a mound of sand not far from the shore, and upon digging up one end of it with a stick, we exposed the long black hair of a woman. We at once covered it up again and placed the stick upright near the mound. When we got back to Lake Forest we mentioned our discovery to the village authority, but how the body came there and what was done afterward we never learned. Undoubtedly it had taken some time for the wind to so thoroughly cover the body, and the only requiem in her lonely resting place was the sound of the waves breaking on the shore.

The boys always found the Lake a most pleasant resort for swimming in the summer. It could only be reached by the ravines. The ravines contained splendid springs where we could always get a drink in hot weather. There was a particular fine sulphur spring near the bridge going over the Des-Plaines River. We had to hold our noses and the last swallow did not taste good, but it served the purpose.

I have the village church in grateful remembrance, for it was there I learned to turn a hand spring. It was this way: My roommate could and I couldn't. Envy, the most malignant of the passions, seized me. After some back-breaking falls on the grass, one Sunday during divine service the thought occurred to me of using the sofa cushions that I was sitting upon. To borrow the key from the janitor and have another made took but a day. In the evenings, after supper, when the boys were taking their usual walk to the depot to see the train come in, I would slip off to the church. Guided by the ghastly gleams of the moon through the windows, I would place some of the cushions in the aisle and throw myself backwards upon them. Even cushions may be hard under these circumstances and my aspiring spirit was chastened by many back-enders, but I learned at last—to the admiration of my schoolmates, who could not account for my proficiency.

Hickory nutting was one of our favorite pastimes, and many were the jagged holes that we tore in our clothes climbing the trees to shake down the nuts to our friends beneath.

I made and put up a lifting machine between the two oak trees back of the Academy, with which we were fond of testing our strength. Thirty years after I went to this spot. The old nails were still in the trees, but the lifting machine was gone with the old Academy.

Professor Miller was a man in prime of life, of splendid physique and dignified presence. He believed that the Millennium was near at hand and, though he might not live to see that happy day, he felt sure we all would, but, alas, Armageddon has come before.

At one time we had a revival that deeply affected the school for a time. I remember an incident. One midnight I went out into the hall in my nightgown, singing "Nearer My God to Thee," and was soon joined by the other students who, marching about, joined me in the hymn. Professor Miller, when he heard of this later, said I must have been inspired.

Dear Professor Miller! No wonder that his kind heart, simple faith and implicit confidence in his students won their love and respect. No doubt he has now found the Millennium in which he had such implicit faith.

There was a young ladies' Seminary under the supervision of Rev. Mr. Dickinson and his amiable daughters and the school girls used to come occasionally to the Academy when we had a debating society, while we sometimes met them at informal picnics in the woods on the bluff. We also visited the girls' school and saw them go through their exercises. Miss Hattie Dickinson, one of the charming daughters of Rev. Mr. Dickinson, principal of this school, had charge of the young mens' Sunday School Class, and we remember her with great affection.

On April 23, 1863, we organized a Literary Society called the "Philologian Society," for the purpose of improvement in "Elocution, Composition and Debate." Weekly meetings were held in the Academy until July 9, 1863.

One of our excitements was a rooster fight between two bantams. As one of them was smaller than the other, his owner (myself), put some snuff under his wings and at the first flap the larger rooster, becoming temporarily blind, soon lost the fight.

In 1860, when rumors of war were heard, Colonel Ellsworth visited the Academy and put us through drills of various kinds and taught us to handle a rifle. This was the cause of much excitement throughout the Academy.

A friendship that has lasted for fifty years started with my first visit to Lake Forest in the summer of 1859. Lieutenant Gov. Bross, John Patterson, one or two other boys and I were walking through the woods along the bluff of the lake trying to shoot squirrels. I had broken away from the party and edged

toward the bluff, when I saw near Clark's ravine a tall young man with a rifle and a string of squirrels. He was out of caps. I had plenty and it was my pleasure to give him a supply. He in return insisted upon my taking his squirrels, of which I had none. This was Bill Atteridge, and later on he and I with rifles obtained twenty-seven fox squirrels in a single day's shooting.

Bill Atteridge lived in a log house on a farm where we always stopped when hunting out in that direction. This farm was a most beautiful one, lying along the ridge west of the depot and sloping down to the Skokie Marsh. It was a never ending pleasure to wander around there and to partake of bread and butter and milk with the Atteridge household. Of all my recollections there are none pleasanter than those connected with this family.

Among others of our village friends we remember with pleasure Charley UMBERHOUND who passed his later years on a farm west of the track, Mr. Anderson, then a hardworking contractor, afterwards a successful storekeeper and always a respected citizen; and Captain McLaughlin, who was carpenter and builder of the village. The latter was one of the most popular men of our remembrance, for he never denied the use of his tools to any boy when the maple sap was running. Hurlbut's store was a pleasant rendezvous when we made our nightly visits to the train. There we bought chocolate creams and at the depot amused ourselves with jumping matches or watching genial Jock Steel at his clog dancing. Mr. and Mrs. Clarke are also in our memory. He was the first mayor of Lake Forest and they were both kind-hearted and true friends to the students.

Nigger Joe, the village factotum, was another familiar and well liked acquaintance. Always whistling, always cheerful, he was a prominent figure at turkey shoots, and an enthusiastic welcomer of the whiskey jug as it passed around.

Among our village friends I remember Dr. Quinlan, (the dentist), to whom we all went for medical services. He was a

pleasant man and of sufficient skill for all demands made upon him.

At that time there were a number of blind pigs where the boys could get whiskey and beer. While this was sometimes done in excess, yet on the whole, the character of the boys stood high. The houses in the village in those days were as follows: Between the depot and the Academy were the houses of Williams, Quinlan, the Hotel, Rossiter, McLaughlin, Symonds, Lind and Thompson. On the south of the main road, the ladies (Ferry) Seminary, Holt and Helm. East of the Academy, Capt. Stokes' residence and the house occupied by Prof. Dickinson. Across the street and north of the Academy the residence of Mrs. Kent, where we got our meals. Two blocks west of this house stood the village church, and near Clark's (Poole's) Ravine was Mr. Bartlett's house.

Mr. Lind, after whom the University was named, lives in our memory with especial affection. He was a kind, genial Scotchman. Once when we wished to shoot prairie chickens and had no dog, he borrowed one, and finding the dog reluctant to leave him he accompanied us a long way himself.

Professors Miller and Dickinson of the Academy were charming men socially, and were beloved by all of the boys. Professor Miller was a civil engineer and believed in a Millennium in the near future and Professor Dickinson was a Presbyterian clergyman. In 1862 Prof. M. C. Butler succeeded Professor Miller as principal and was popular with everyone.

Among the students who have become noted men was William D. Price, 53d Reg. Ill. Volunteers. Born March 1, 1843. He entered Lake Forest Academy September, 1859, and was there two years. At the September term of 1861 he was ready for college. During the spring of 1861, as above noted, our class received military drill under Colonel Ellsworth and in October, 1861, Price entered the 53d Regiment of the Illinois Volunteers organized at Ottawa, Illinois, as a private, Company A; became an Orderly Sergeant in September, 1862, was appointed Second Lieutenant and was killed at the battle of the Big Hatchie October 5, 1862. He was the son of Captain

William H. Price, Ottawa, LaSalle County, Illinois, and I remember with pleasure his family whom I visited in the Christmas of 1861.

C. Vilasco Chandler is another noted member of the class and one of the best friends that anyone could possibly have. He too went to war and obtained honor and a commission. He was a Colonel on the staff of Governor Tanner. At Chickamauga a bullet went through one of his legs and made him lame for life. On retiring from the Army he succeeded his father in the First National Bank at Macomb, Illinois, and for many years was the principal banker in that part of the country. There is no man today held in higher estimation in his home. I made several delightful visits to his father's house and his father, his sister and his brother-in-law are valued friends of the past. He erected in the cemetery at Macomb, from money saved from his pension fund, a beautiful monument in memory of his fellow citizens who were killed in the Civil War.

Another friend well worthy of mention is Wilbur T. Norton, a fine student and a faithful friend. He was promoter, principal editor and writer of our "Forest Gem," a paper which was composed and contributed to by the boys and written up at the end of every week for our meeting, in the beautiful handwriting of Dan Dickinson. These papers were unfortunately burned in the Chicago fire. Wilbur T. Norton after leaving school followed the newspaper profession, was a member of the 133d Infantry in 1864, was a member of the Board of Education at Alton, was a Presidential Elector in 1880, was Editor of the "Alton Republic" from 1894-1897, is the author of "Centennial History of Madison County," has published several pamphlets of local interest and was for several years vice president of the Illinois State Historical Society. He was also Postmaster at Alton for many years. Wilbur T. Norton is one of the most respected, best known and most influential citizens today in Alton.

I remember the following poem written in the "Forest Gem":

THE WANDERER'S GRAVE.

Down by the rocks that kiss the sea,
 Far away in a distant land;
 Where the blue waves roll so dreamily,
 Or rise and fall on the pebbled strand;
 Where the wild winds and the waters rave,
 In that lone spot is the Wanderer's Grave.

The Wanderer's grave! A silent spell
 Steals round the spot where the weary sleep,
 And the waters whisper, "All is well";
 As over his lonely grave they creep.
 They whisper this, as with tears they lave
 The golden sands of the Wanderer's grave.

He has fought the fight and gone to rest,
 And lies all alone by the gloomy sea,
 Save the storm birds who with fearless breast
 Sweep over the waters wild and free.
 And ever mournful rolls the wave
 Over the lonely Wanderer's grave.

—EDWARD CAFFREY.

This poem was written by Edward Caffrey. He went to Lake Forest after the War, holding an officer's commission. The following day he went to Chicago, leaving his sword and accoutrements at Lake Forest, intending to return immediately, and was never heard of afterwards. No regiment saw more war than the 8th Illinois Cavalry, of which he was a member.

I cannot remember the time when I did not know John C. Patterson. He was one of our best scholars, was liked by everybody and was one of the best all 'round men in the school. He has since followed the profession of law, at which he has been successful.

The first Senior Class prepared for college was composed of: John C. Patterson, C. Vilasco Chandler, R. E. Starkweather, William Price, Wilbur T. Norton.

The first Junior Class was composed of: Chas. R. Wilkinson, D. O. Dickinson, George Manierre, Lucan G. Yoe.

Finally, amid the shadows of the past, memory recalls the names of Howk, Spencer, Judd, Kent, Dyer, Dickinson, Brothers, Miller, Phinney, Lewis, Starkweather, Steel, Yoe, Matteson, Wilkinson, Butterfield and others. Their histories are mostly unknown to me, but they are not forgotten. Time, distance, business cares and death have separated us, but may we not hope, as we have been taught to do at the Academy, that there will be for us a Grand Reunion in the Millenium that has no end.

The following is a list of the Board of Trustees and Faculty as published in the Catalogue of Lind University, in the year 1861:

BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

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FACULTY.

ACADEMICAL DEPARTMENT.

S. F. Miller, A. M., Professor of Mathematics, and
Principal of the Preparatory Department.
Rev. Wm. C. Dickinson, A. M., Professor of Languages.
C. E. Dickinson, A. B., Tutor.

The following is a partial list of the students:

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| William Atteridge. | Wm. S. Lawrence. |
| J. Edward Bartlett. | Edward C. Lewis. |
| Gilbert Bedell. | George Manierre, Jr. |
| John S. Black. | Joseph Matteson. |
| Chas. T. Brothers. | Ellery L. Miller. |
| David Burr. | Martin Norton. |
| Chas. W. Butterfield. | Wilbur T. Norton. |
| Edward Caffrey. | William Olcott. |
| Chas. Vilasco Chandler. | Charles L. Page. |
| Frederick Chapman. | John C. Patterson. |
| Edward C. Chase. | Charles L. Phinney. |
| Frank B. Chase. | William D. Price. |
| Dwight M. Cobb. | Charles E. Quinlan. |
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| Walter Gurnee. | Richard D. Stokes. |
| George M. Gage. | Frank Sturgis. |
| James H. Hill. | Walter Trumbull. |
| Augustus H. Howk. | Samuel D. Wauchope. |
| Charles S. Hulburd. | Alexander White, Jr. |
| Daniel A. Jones. | Charles L. Wilkinson. |
| Frank R. Judd. | Albert R. Willard. |
| Frederick H. Kent. | Lucien G. Yoe. |
| Philip C. Latham. | |

CHRONOLOGY.

- 1856 Lake Forest platted.
- 1857 Lind University chartered.
- 1859 Lake Forest Academy opened: Prof. Samuel F. Miller
first principal.
- 1859 Seminary for young women organized by Rev. Baxter
Dickinson: succeeded by Ferry Hall.
- 1861 College work begun under Prof. W. C. Dickinson.
- 1865 University charter amended: Name changed to Lake
Forest University. Academy Building reconstructed.
- 1868 Ferry Hall Seminary for young women constructed.
- 1879 Academy Building burned. New Academy Building
erected.

“Still o’er these scenes my memory wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care:
Time but the impression deeper makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.”

—Burns.

“Oh! friends regretted, scenes forever dear,
Remembrance hails you with her warmest tear!
Drooping she bends o’er pensive Fancy’s urn,
To trace the hours which never can return.”

—Byron.